



# State of Nevada Advisory Council on Federal Assistance and Special Projects Subcommittee

## Meeting Minutes

Prepared by the Nevada Office of Grant Procurement, Coordination, and Management (Grant Office)  
406 E. Second St. Carson City NV 89701 | 775-684-0156 | <http://grant.nv.gov>

**March 27, 2020 at 8:00 a.m.**

By Teleconference

**(775) 687-0999**

**(702) 486-5260**

**Participant Code: 45676**

### 1. Call to Order (For Possible Action)

John Ritter called the meeting to order at 8:10 a.m.

### 2. Roll Call

#### In Attendance

John Ritter, Chairman

Kathi Thomas-Gibson, Vice Chair

Assemblywoman Shea Backus

Zanny Marsh

JoVon Sotak, Secretary

Tiffany Greenameyer, representing Susan Brown

#### Absent

Susan Brown, Governor's Finance Office

Senator David Parks

Laena St-Jules, Deputy Attorney General, recommended that since there was a subcommittee vote later, roll should be called for those being appointed to the subcommittee.

#### Special Projects Subcommittee Appointees Present

Irene Bustamante Adams

Denise Tanata

Miles Dickson

Erin Hasty

Connie Lucido  
Heidi Parker  
Maureen Shafer

**Also in Attendance**

Laena St-Jules, Attorney General's Office  
Brenda Herbstman, Clark County Social Services  
Stephanie Vrsnik, NV PEP

**3. Public Comment**

Brenda Herbstman, from Clark County Social Services, thanked the council members for their work.

**4. Approval of Minutes (For Possible Action)**

Chairman Ritter questioned how the council should refer assignments to the subcommittee. He asked if other special projects could be assigned to the Special Projects Subcommittee or if a separate committee needed to be formed. Laena St-Jules said the council could create a separate subcommittee, or they could refer other special projects to the Special Projects Subcommittee.

Assemblywoman Backus asked if this was a combined meeting for the subcommittee and inquired if it was necessary to approve the March 13, 2020 minutes. Laena St-Jules explained that because there was a quorum of the council present, the meeting is also a meeting of the council, and the minutes need to be approved either at this meeting or within 45 days.

Kathi Thomas-Gibson: **Motion** to approve minutes for March 13, 2020 meeting. Zanny Marsh: **Seconded. Carried.**

**5. Agenda Items (For Possible Action)**

**A. Appointment of the Chair to the Special Projects Subcommittee (John Ritter)**

Members reviewed that the council chair needs to appoint a member from the council to serve as chair of the Special Projects Subcommittee. Chairman Ritter said since he is the council's chair, he'd prefer to have a different subcommittee chair and asked if a council member would be willing to serve.

Zanny Marsh said she'd joined the subcommittee as a non-voting member at the previous meeting and thought Senator Parks was interested in serving as subcommittee chair. Because he was not present, she would serve as chair. Laena St-Jules confirmed a non-voting member could be subcommittee chair.

Assemblywoman Backus: **Motion** to appoint Zanny Marsh as chair of the subcommittee. Kathi Thomas Gibson: **Seconded. Carried.**

**B. Appointment of Special Projects Subcommittee Members (John Ritter)**

Chairman Ritter introduced the agenda item and stated he and JoVon Sotak spoke after the March 13, 2020 council meeting, and they assembled a list of potential subcommittee members.

Each person recommended for the subcommittee introduced themselves:

*Irene Bustamante Adams, Workforce Connections*

- Currently Deputy Director of Workforce Connections, Ms. Bustamante Adams worked with Chairman Ritter and others at the meeting as a member of the Legislature. She now serves the public by assisting in employment and workforce development.

*Denise Tanata, Children's Advocacy Alliance*

- Currently at Children's Advocacy Alliance, Ms. Tanata is moving to United Way of Southern Nevada next month. She has been working on child advocacy issues and legislative advocacy for many years.

*Miles Dickson, Nevada State Treasurer's Office*

- Mr. Dickson is currently Chief of Staff for the Nevada Treasurer's Office. Prior to this position, he has spent past eight or nine years working with non-profits and other agencies on federal funding and spent law school researching and writing on the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act.

*Erin Hasty, Nevada Grant Office*

- Ms. Hasty currently serves as an Executive Grant Analyst in the Grant Office where she manages the grant training program and provides pre-award grant assistance. She has also implemented grant programs in health and workforce development.

*Connie Lucido, Nevada Department of Health and Human Services  
Director's Office, Grant Management Unit*

- Currently the Chief of Grants Management Unit in Health and Human Services, Ms. Lucido has been involved with grants for 20 years as subrecipient and federal grantee. She has grant compliance experience and currently oversees the Fund for a Healthy Nevada and other block grants coming to Nevada.

*Heidi Parker, Alliance for Nevada Nonprofits*

- Currently the Chair for Alliance for Nevada Nonprofits, Ms. Parker has also been the Executive Director of Immunize Nevada for the past 13 years and has a lot of experience in managing grants.

*Maureen Shafer, Council for a Better Nevada*

- Ms. Shafer currently serves as the Executive Director of Council for a Better Nevada (CBN). She and CBN have worked with Chairman Ritter and Mr. Dickson on improving the Nevada Federal Competitive process for about 10 years.

JoVon Sotak said members who presented to the council in January, including Eide Bailey, Carol Kraus from Illinois, and the Nevada State Controller could be consulted as the subcommittee meets. Ms. Sotak said there are a lot of resources the committee can access and as Communications Chair to the subcommittee, she would be glad to connect members to those resources. Chairman Ritter asked if she meant that those people just mentioned should be asked to be on the subcommittee. Ms. Sotak said she believed the subcommittee was already at a good size, but put the question to the subcommittee members. Chairman Ritter said he agreed that he didn't want to make the subcommittee too large and postponed discussed until agenda item C.

Laena St-Jules said she would recommend specifying voting or nonvoting status for every member appointed on the subcommittee.

Kathi Thomas-Gibson: **Motion** to move that the list of appointees for the Special Projects Subcommittee be appointed as full voting members to be able to execute all priorities and projects set forth. Assemblywoman Backus: **Seconded. Carried.**

**C. Special Projects Subcommittee Next Steps (Subcommittee Chairperson)**

Zanny Marsh asked Chairman Ritter to move forward presenting this section.

Chairman Ritter explained that the primary purpose of the subcommittee is to prepare for the next legislative session by identifying which council priorities will need legislation and planning how to execute the legislative plan. Chairman Ritter reviewed the first three priorities from the 2019 annual report to discuss if each item will require legislation.

Item #1: Streamline review and authorization process for grant work plans by the Interim Finance Committee. Chairman Ritter informed the subcommittee that JoVon Sotak and Susan Brown from the Governor's Finance Office (GFO) are working on this and may have a solution without legislation and details were provided. Chairman Ritter suggested JoVon and Susan continue to work through this process. Chairman Ritter summarized the issue with Nevada's grant work program approval process and indicated that Susan Brown has been working on the issues for several years. It was agreed by the subcommittee that the administrative process should move forward and that legislation was not currently needed.

Item #2: Eliminate budgetary disincentives. Chairman Ritter explained that the perception of agencies is that their state budgets will be reduced by the amount of any grant award and that Susan Brown feels can be solved administratively and details were discussed. JoVon Sotak mentioned she had brief conversations with Susan Brown and believed the underlying issue in perception may be addressed by education that can be incorporated into the Grant Office training program. Chairman Ritter recommended allowing Ms. Sotak and Ms. Brown to move forward with administrative solutions. Kathi Thomas-Gibson stated written guidance on how to interpret and apply the Authorized Expenditures Act Section 10 will be necessary. JoVon Sotak said she believed the misalignment stemmed from a lack of clarity in the work program regarding the agency's level of effort and will verify if written guidance on Section 10 interpretation is available for agencies. It was agreed by the subcommittee that the administrative process should move forward and that legislation was not currently needed.

Item #3: Continue to support the budget enhancement for the statewide grant management system. Chairman Ritter provided a summary and stated that the council learned at the March 5, 2020 meeting that existing funding was insufficient. Chairman Ritter acknowledged that the COVID-19 situation may make seeking funding from the Legislature difficult and that the council may need to focus on those issues without fiscal notes. Kathi Thomas-Gibson said local governments will receive COVID-19 grant funding that includes technical assistance and suggested that COVID-19 grants may be used for council priorities. JoVon Sotak said the Grant Office is monitoring COVID-19 funding closely, and though many dollars are allocated to direct services, she would continue to monitor. JoVon Sotak stated that though approved to move forward with the technology needs assessment for the grant management system with the funding she currently has, the current situation may prevent her from moving forward. She will keep the council informed. This item will be discussed further at the next meeting.

**D. Special Projects Subcommittee Meetings and Member Availability**  
(Subcommittee Chairperson)

The next meeting was scheduled for April 10, 2020 from 7:30 a.m. to 9:00 a.m.

**6. Public Comment**

Miles Dickson encouraged the council to invite representation, either officially or unofficially, from the Governor's Finance Office and the Legislative Council Bureau's fiscal team to participate in any conversations regarding legislation. JoVon Sotak said she would reach out to the Governor's Finance Office and the Legislative Council Bureau to see if they would like to provide a resource to the subcommittee.

**7. Adjournment (For Possible Action)**

Assemblywoman Backus: **Motion** to adjourn at 9:12 a.m. Kathi Thomas-Gibson:  
**Seconded. Carried.**